

St. Augustine Continued

November 11

Day two we did the town, lovely old Spanish architecture.





Below is the oldest public space in America, laid out by Spanish Royal Ordinances in 1573. It is said that the Constitution Monument may be the only remaining monument in the Western Hemisphere celebrating the Spanish Constitution of 1812.



Dr. Peck House, circa 1750, owned by the Royal Treasurer late in the first Spanish period then purchased by Peck in 1837, willed to the city in 1931 and restored in 1968.



Town Plaza, said to be the oldest in the nation.







We visited the Castillo De San Marcos fortress. Again, the oldest in the continental United States which anchored the St. Augustine defense system.





My Wallace with a guard in garb from the first Spanish period.







These lookouts surround the fort with a 30 foot drop to the ground below. There were children running and climbing everywhere, gave me the willies.

The disclaimer:



Matanzas River Anchorage

November 13

Along the River



Our new backyard was a Searay factory. There used to be an old cement plant here but it is now gone. A very small anchorage as a good section of it was cordoned off to accommodate work being done on shore.



Wallace spent the day working:



He built me a platform to stand on so I don't have to stand on that little ledge. It is too hard on the feet and I could only do about an hour at a time driving.

Wallace made me a step, so I made him a potato salad.



Another beautiful night sky here.



Left bright an early for Rockhouse Creek
November 14th

Now, this is the cutest bridge I've seen along the way.



We anchored in an inlet to the ocean, the perfect place for dolphins! We did see three of them playing and Wallace got some pictures, but they are barely visible. So hard to share this experience, but I am still determined to get a good shot.

Merit Bay

Along the way here I saw a dolphin riding in our bow wave and three more playing in our stern wake. They were twisting on their sides and cavorting along behind us. Unbelievable! Wallace promised me that our next stop there would be dolphins and Manatees. He came through in spades.

We stayed on the dock here for the night. What a sight to see, it was as if we stepped back into prehistoric times. There were 19 manatees in the bay, even the locals said they had not seen that many at one time here. There were three dolphins fishing at the mouth of the bay and numerous pelicans fishing and flying overhead. It was our own Jurassic Park, the sights and sounds both.



Brave man who described them as soft, slimy and jello like.



They were very inquisitive and popped their noses out to have a look at us.



What an adventure to spend the day there. All the creatures stayed for about 5 hours and then at about 5:00 in the evening every one of them left the bay together.



In the morning, all the manatees and pelicans had returned, no dolphins though. As Wallace started the engine the entire bay erupted like popcorn. We startled them and the poor things all jumped in unison.

We are coming here on our return trip😊

Titusville

November 16th

We left and had a short run to the Titusville Mooring field. This was my first time hooking to a mooring ball and Wallace wanted me to experience it fully. So off I go to the bow with my boat hook looking for an eye on the rope. Well, the eye was way under water and I had to pull the rope up by hand, good lord it was covered in something gross that looked little white barnacles or maybe it was just salt (at least this is what I tried convinced myself it was....cringing with disgust). Anyways I did it and we were hooked. Got to say, anchoring is the way to go.

The Titusville marina has laundry, water, showers, wifi, fuel and it is a \$20 fee for a mooring ball. You can walk to grocery, drug and auto shop stores.



We walked to town in search of the elusive fuel filters. They had some here but the price was even higher than West Marines; 28 dollars. So we will continue to look and will probably bite the bullet and pay West Marines price. We got some more provisions to lighten the big load before we cross to the Bahamas where supplies are either limited or quite dear. We are limited to two backpacks so the shopping is a bit piecemeal and apparently we are simply unable to stick to the list of necessities because we consistently come home with a full load yet nothing gets crossed off the list.

Saw these lovelies on our walk to town.





This is just wrong! This sign



Is not 30 feet from this sign.



Ballard Park, Eau Gallie

November 17

We stopped at the dock and got gas for the dinghy and generator, topped up with potable water, swabbed the deck and were off to Eau Gallie. We passed Cape Canaveral where there is to be a launch on Saturday, unfortunately we will miss it.

Wallace spotted Sheena II, friends of his Mike and Sue, along the way. We pulled up to say hello, but sadly nobody was aboard. So we left our calling card and continued along our way.

Anchored in Ballard Park, what a beautiful spot



Mike, from Cloud, came over in his dinghy to greet us and offer us local knowledge. We weren't going ashore so we didn't need anything but Mike came aboard in the evening and we had drinks together. What a character this guy was, he says "I'm a UFO chaser, and aliens are among us", and that in his opinion was good news. "The government knows about them, but they are not making it public. You can recognize them because they have no ear lobes, like Trump's son." He shared photos of UFO's he had seen and gave us a CD to watch so we could see for ourselves that the truth is out there. It was quite the entertaining evening. Mike also gave us a CD he makes for boaters with 1000 songs on it, lots of rock and roll, some good stuff, thanks Mike.

This was another great spot for wildlife, I sat on the bow in the evening for about an hour watching the pelican's acrobatics, eagles circling for prey and dolphins playing in the bay and under the boat. I counted 17 dolphin sightings just on the short trip here.

Vero Beach Marina

November 18th

Wallace says that Vero Beach is sometimes referred to as Velcro Beach as many cruisers get this far and love the place so much that they just stay here.

Vero Beach Municipal Marina is \$15 for a mooring ball (we rafted to Charlie and Cathy's boat, *My Time Too*) so no gross lines to handle this time. There are showers, wifi (albeit it intermittent), and a free bus to take you to town or the beach that runs every hour.

We took the bus to town to stock up on some more provisions and got the bulky paper products, toilet paper, paper towels, etc. The next day we decided to take the bikes to town to fill the knap sacks with canned goods.

True to form, this is what we came back with. We might starve, but we probably won't care!



We did the farmer's market and as always, visited the beach.



Patsy, if you are reading this, check out the tutu snowman.



I am itching to decorate the boat for Christmas, but have compromised with Mr. Grinch to wait until December 1st. Our rafted neighbours are all decked out in Christmas lights, Disney's frozen blow ups and thanksgiving turkeys.



We ended the day with a ride through the mangroves, gorgeous and peaceful.



Sunday now and we have learnt that the free bus doesn't run on Sunday, don't know when we will get all those heavy provisions we keep talking about. Wallace is spending some time packing the stuffing box (how's that for boat speak and I even know what it means!). Our bilge is lined with foul water and the boat is a bit stinky so hopefully this will stop the leak and we can get the thing dried up for good. Charlie next door knew we were in need of some materials and must have spread the word because some guy just showed up in his dinghy asking what we needed and then headed off to get it for us.

As we've been here going on a few days, we are running the generator to charge up the batteries and so Wallace can get his fill of power tools, he is up there in the pilot house drilling a hole right now. Did I mention, I'm sure I did, that Wallace loves to drill holes in the boat. He is running the radio antenna properly so we can get a wider choice of stations. I think the Sunday selection of religion or nutrition broadcasts motivated him.

Okay it's not December 1st but technically it's not a Christmas decoration until I put the lights on it ☺, just a little reminder of the mangroves.



The noseums (tiny little, annoying, biting bugs) are terrible. I have 29 bites, the itch lasts for days, and every one of them is driving me mad. I had to get out of bed last night so I wouldn't drive Wallace crazy with my scratching, who by the way doesn't have any bites, what the hell!! I overheard a conversation between cruisers that baby oil or NoGnat works for these little pests. Those are now on the list and I won't be coming home without them.

We decided to stay here two more nights as we really are in need of proper provisions before we cross to the Bahamas. So we took the dingy to the Marina and took the bus to town once again.



Geez, we suck at this!



But, we visited the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary





Interesting root ball hung from a chain in the tree.





For our bench collection.

Okay, one more trip to town on Tuesday.



Now, that's how it's done.